

6
A
S E R M O N
O N
5

2 Kings vii. 2. latter Part.

Printed

On the Occasion of a late Unparallel'd
Instance of Distrust in PROVIDENCE,
shewn in the *Wilful Murders* com-
mitted by R. SMITH on the Bodies of
his WIFE and CHILD.

*Put thou thy Trust in the Lord, and be doing
Good: Dwell in the Land, and verily thou
shalt be fed.* Psalm xxxvii. 3.

By a Divine of the Church of England.

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. ROBERTS in *Warwick-Lane.*
M.DCC.XXXII.

SERMON

2 Kings VII. 2. Latter Part



On the Occasion of the
Interment of the late
King in the West
minsters by R. 8
the 17th and 18th

For the 17th and 18th

of the 17th and 18th

of the 17th and 18th



2

Be



wh
wh
of

wa



2 Kings vii. 2. latter Part.

*Behold, thou shalt see it with thine
Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.*



THESE Words are a Denunciation of Vengeance against that *scoffing Lord*, who *turn'd to Ridicule* the Message which God sent to *Jehoram King of Israel* by his Prophet *Elisha*.

WHEN the Famine of *Samaria* was so very grievous, and lasted

B

so

so long, that the perishing Inhabitants despaired of any Relief, God was pleased to let them know, by the Mouth of *Elisba*, that their Deliverance was nigh at hand.

THEN *Elisba* said, Hear ye the Word of the Lord, thus saith the Lord, *To Morrow about this Time shall a Measure of fine Flower be sold for a Shekel, and two Measures of Barley for a Shekel, in the Gate of Samaria.*

THEN a Lord, on whose Hand the King leaned, answered the Man of God, and said, *Behold, if the*
Lord

[3]

Lord would make Windows in Heaven, might this Thing be? And Elisha said, Behold thou shalt see it with thine Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. Ver. 1, 2.

THUS did *Elisha* denounce a just Punishment against that scoffing Lord, who openly derided the Promise, and distrusted the Power and Faithfulness of God Almighty.

BECAUSE the promised Deliverance was too great to be wrought by any *human Means*, he therefore wickedly thought it beyond the

Reach of God's *Power*; and because it seemed to him, that God was *unable* to effect it, and perform his Promise, he therefore boldly and rashly presumed, that God must of Consequence prove *unfaithful*, and break his Word.

THESE were the impious Thoughts of that Lord on whose Hand the King leaned: But he not only *saw* with *his own Eyes* God's Promise fulfill'd, but also *felt* in *his own Body* the second Prediction accomplished; for we read in the seventeenth Verse of this Chapter, *That*

That the King appointed the Lord on whose Hand he leaned, to have the Charge of the Gate; and the People trode upon him in the Gate, and he died. He saw the promised Plenty with his Eyes, but did not live to eat thereof. Behold, thou shalt see it with thine Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.

AND here it will not be improper to observe by what unexpected Means this great Deliverance was brought about, as we find it recorded in this Chapter, out of which I have taken my Text.

IN the Verses immediately following my Text, we read, *And there were four leprous Men at the entering in of the Gate; and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say we will enter into the City, then the Famine is in the City, and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also: Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the Host of the Syrians; if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the Twilight, to go unto the Camp of the Syrians; and when they were come to the uttermost*

Part

Part of the Camp of Syria, behold there was no Man there ; for the Lord had made the Host of the Syrians to hear a Noise of Chariots and a Noise of Horses, even the Noise of a great Host ; and they said one to another, Lo, the King of Israel hath hired against us the Kings of the Hittites, and the Kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose, and fled in the Twilight, and left their Tents, and their Horses, and their Asses, even the Camp as it was, and fled for their Life.

And when the Lepers came to the uttermost Part of the Camp, they went

into one Tent, and did eat and drink,
 and carried thence Silver, and Gold,
 and Raiment, and went and hid it;
 and came again, and entered into
 another Tent, and carried thence also,
 and went and hid it. Then they said
 one to another, We do not well; this
 Day is a Day of good Tidings, and
 we hold our Peace: If we tarry till
 the Morning Light, some Mischief
 will come upon us; now therefore
 come, that we may go and tell the
 King's Household.

So they came, and called unto the
 Porter of the City, and they told him,
 saying, We came to the Camp of the
 Syrians,

Syrians, and behold, there was no Man there, neither Voice of Man ; but Horses tied, and Asses tied, and the Tents as they were. And he called the Porters, and they told it to the King's House within.

No Famine was ever more terrible and afflicting than this Famine in *Samaria*, except that in *Jerusalem*, which happen'd in those Days which our Saviour had foretold should come upon her ; when her Enemies did cast a Trench about her, and compassed her round, and kept her in on every side, and laid her even with the Ground,
and

and her Children within her, *Luke* xix. 43, & 44. Then Famine was at the Height ; then a Bushel of Corn was sold for a hundred Crowns ; and the starving *Jews* were glad to find the Dung of *Oxen*, that they might get a short Reprieve from approaching Death. Then the Wives, whose Care it used to be to provide Meat for their Husbands, were the first who took it out of their Mouths : Children snatched from their Parents, and Mothers from their Infants. Then, according to the Prophecy of *Jeremiah*, *The Lord caused them to eat the Flesh of their*

(II)

their Sons, and the Flesh of their Daughters ; and they did eat every one the Flesh of his Friend in the Siege and Straitness, wherewith their Enemies, and they that fought their Lives, did straiten them. Jerem. xix. 9.

THIS Famine, no doubt, was the severest Judgment that was ever executed on a People ; it being inflicted as a Punishment for the greatest Sin that was ever committed by a People, namely, the Crucifying the Son of God, and putting him to an open Shame.

BUT

But among all the various Descriptions of Misery and Distress, which are given us in the Old Testament, there is none related with more tragical Circumstances than the great Famine which raged in *Samaria*.

THE *sad* and *lamentable* Condition of the *starving* Inhabitants, and the *signal* and *surprizing* Interposition of the *Almighty*, at once raise in us the different Motions of *Pity* and *Compassion*, of *Joy* and *Amazement*.

So extremely raging was the Famine, that it was able to dissolve
the

the strong Ties of Nature, and wholly to take away all Distinction of Blood and Kindred. For as the King of Israel was passing by upon the Wall, there cried a Woman unto him, saying, Help, my Lord, O King! And he said, If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee? out of the Barn-Floor, or out of the Wine-Press? And the King said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This Woman said unto me, Give thy Son, that we may eat him to Day, and we will eat my Son to Morrow. So we boiled my Son, and did eat him: And I said unto her on the next Day, Give thy Son that we may eat him;

him ; and ſhe hid her Son. And it came to paſs when the King heard the Words of the Woman, that he rent his Clothes, Chap. vi. 26, &c.

THE bare Relation of this dreadful and barbarous Act of Cruelty ſtruck *Jehoram*, who was far from being a good and tender Prince, with ſuch a Horror and Detestation of ſo inhuman a Deed, that he immediately rent his Cloaths ; though the very acting of it had no ſuch Effect on the hungry Mother. One would have thought a Mother could never have *beheld*, without *Aſtoniſhment*, much leſs have

have eaten, with *any Pleasure* the *boiled Flesh* of her Son, but would have chosen rather to *die with Hunger*, than to be *kept alive* by that *Flesh*, to which *she herself* gave the first Nourishment.

UNDER these terrible Circumstances of Misery and Despair were the People of *Samaria* : Without their Walls were the powerful and numerous Hosts of the *Syrians*; within their Walls *Famine* and *Death*. They had no Hopes of being rescued from their Enemies, nor any *visible Means* of being supplied with Provisions, but were
utterly

utterly destitute as to any human Help, and without any Prospect of a Deliverance either from the *Syrians* or the Famine.

UNDER these desperate Circumstances, no Power but a *divine one* could assist them : Nothing less than the Almighty Hand of Providence could deliver them out of this fore Distress. And accordingly, in this critical Juncture God sends the Prophet *Elisba* to *Jehoram* with this comfortable Message, *Hear ye the Word of the Lord, thus saith the Lord, To-morrow about this Time shall a Measure of fine Flower*

be

be sold for a Shekel, (that is, at a very low Price,) and two Measures of Barley for a Shekel, in the Gates of Samaria.

THIS Promise of so great Importance, and so much beyond all Expectation, made a Lord, who trusted more in the Policy and Contrivance of Men than in the Power of God, openly discover his Unbelief and Distrust of the Prophet's Prediction: For the Man of God had no sooner delivered his Message to the King, but the Lord on whose Hand the King leaned, answered him with a Scoff, and said

C

Behold,

Behold, if the Lord would make Windows in Heaven, might this Thing be? As much as if he had said, If the Lord would shower down Provisions in the greatest Plenty imaginable, and even overwhelm them with a Deluge of Corn, it could hardly be sold at so low a Price. For this prophane Lord had certainly an Eye in this his Scoff to the eleventh Verse of the seventh Chapter of Genesis, where, when God was bringing a Deluge upon the Earth, it is said, That the Windows of Heaven were opened.

BUT

BUT the Prophet in Reply to him affirm'd, That not only what he foretold should assuredly come to pass, but moreover, that the very Day which should give Life to the perishing Inhabitants of *Samaria*, should give him his Death; and that he himself should see with his own Eyes the promised Plenty, but should not enjoy it. *Behold, thou shalt see it with thine Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.* From this Explication of the Text, we may make the following Inferences.

First, THAT when God promises a Deliverance, he will certainly

bring it to pass, though the Means whereby it may be effected lie beyond the Reach of all human Policy and Contrivance.

Secondly, THAT they who distrust God's Power to bring to pass what he has promised, because the Means whereby it may be effected come not within the Comprehension of their narrow Understandings, will certainly meet with a just Punishment. They may live to see, though not to partake of the promised Deliverance: *Behold, thou shalt see it with thine Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.*

3dly,

Thirdly, and *Lastly*, THAT in all our Exigencies, and under all our Difficulties, it is our Duty to put our Trust and Confidence in the Lord, and he, in his appointed Time, will deliver us out of them all.

AND, first, when God promises a Deliverance, he will certainly bring it to pass, though the Means whereby it may be effected lie beyond the Reach of all human Policy and Contrivance.

HOWSOEVER difficult or impossible the promised Deliverance may seem to us, yet God has always ready the Means of bringing to pass what he has promised. It may lay beyond the Limits of human Policy and Contrivance, but still it is within the Reach of God's Power.

It is the Lord alone who in Famine can redeem us from Death; and in War from the Power of the Sword.

Job v. 20. Let us be in never so great Straits, yet if God gives us his Promise of a Deliverance, he will certainly perform it; and if we disbelieve it, that very Disbelief

lief will deprive us of the Benefit
 of it : Behold, thou shalt see it with
 thine Eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.
 When the Word of the Lord goeth
 forth out of his Mouth, it shall
 not return unto him void ; but
 it shall accomplish that which it
 pleaseth ; and it shall prosper in
 the Thing whereunto he sendeth
 it. As he has thought so shall it
 come to pass ; and as he has purpo-
 sed, so shall it stand ; and what his
 Soul desireth, even that he doth : For
 there is nothing too hard for the
 Lord.

ONE would have thought that
 the many Miracles which God at
sundry Times and in *divers Man-*
ners had wrought among his Peo-
 ple, would have sufficiently re-
 moved all Distrust and Infidelity :
 For was it not as easy for that
 God, who kept the Widow's Barrel
 of Meal, and Cruse of Oil from
 failing, 1 *Kings* xvii. 16. to pro-
 vide the People of *Samaria* also
 with Corn ? He who *rained down*
Bread from Heaven for his Peo-
 ple in the Wilderness, could,
 if he pleased, as easily have
rained down Corn on the People
 of

of *Samaria*. We may rest assured that God's *Infinite Power* can help us in any Extremity; and that, if we are worthy Objects of his Compassion, his infinite Love will, if, like the three Children of the Captivity, we are cast into the Midst of a burning fiery Furnace, he can deliver us, and make the Flames forget to burn; or if, like *Daniel*, we are cast into the Den of Lions, he can stop their Mouths, and restrain the Violence of their Hunger.

2dly,

2dly, **THEY** who distrust
 God's Power to bring to pass what
 he has promised, because the Means
 whereby it may be effected come
 not within the Comprehension of
 their narrow Understandings, will
 certainly meet with a just Punish-
 ment: They may live to see,
 though not to partake of the pro-
 mised Deliverance. *Behold, thou
 shalt see it with thine Eyes, but shalt
 not eat thereof.*

INFIDELITY, and an impious
 Distrust, deprives and robs Men of
 that Benefit and Advantage of
 God's Providence, which all those
 who

who firmly rely upon him so largely enjoy; and *Despair* commonly treads close on the Heels of that Person, who dares not put his Confidence in God, as we too plainly see in the late dreadful Instance of ——— SMITH; and indeed there have been few who have murmured at the Proceedings of God, or have distrusted his Providence, but have been overtaken by a just Punishment,

God is very jealous of his Honour, and none shall with Impunity dare to think that he can be guilty of a *Breach of Promise*. In
the

the thirteenth and fourteenth Chapters of the Book of Numbers, we are told, That Moses, by Commandment of the Lord, sent Men from the Wilderness of Paran to search the Land of Canaan; and that the Men that were sent, returned from searching the Land after forty Days, and came to Moses, and gave him an Account of it; but through Fear and Distrust they added, *Nevertheless, the People be strong that inhabit the Land, and the Cities are walled, and very great; and moreover we saw the Children of Anak.*

THEY

THEY all, except Joshua and Caleb, gave such an Account of the Strength of the Canaanites, as disheartened the rest of the Israelites from thinking they should ever become Masters of the Land, as God had promised them. By this their Infidelity, God was so justly provoked, that he swore in his Wrath, that they should not enter into his Rest; that none of all the Israelites which murmured against him, from twenty Years old, and upwards, should live to come into the Land of Canaan, except Joshua and Caleb. As for all the others, they should

should die in the Wilderness, and their Children should wander in the Wilderness forty Years.

Your Children shall wander in the Wilderness forty Years; after the Number of the Days in which ye searched the Land, even forty Days (each Day for a Year) shall ye bear your Iniquities, even forty Years, and ye shall know my Breach of Promise.
Numb. xiv. 33, 34.

THUS were they forced to submit to the Judgment which they had brought upon themselves by their Infidelity.

WHEN

WHEN *Hezekiah*, dismayed at the warlike Preparations of so potent and formidable an Enemy as the King of *Assyria*, enter'd into an Alliance with the King of *Egypt*, because this Alliance seem'd to carry in it a Distrust of God's Providence and Protection, the Prophet *Isaiab* is sent to shew him the great Folly and Wickedness of trusting to *Egypt*, and forsaking the Almighty.

Woe to them, saith the Prophet,
 Chap. xxxi. that go down to Egypt
 for Help, and stay on Horses, and
 trust

trust in Chariots because they are many, and in Horseman because they are strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord. And Chap. xxx. Woe to the rebellious Children that walk down into Egypt, to strengthen themselves in the Strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the Shadow of Egypt; therefore shall the Strength of Pharaoh be your Shame, and the Trust in the Shadow of Egypt your Confusion.

AND in the New Testament, when Zacharias seemed not to give Credit to the Words of the Angel Gabriel, and said unto him, *Whereby shall*

shall I know this? for I am an old Man, and my Wife well stricken in Year, Luke i. 18. the Angel at once gave him a Sign and a Punishment, saying, Behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the Day that these Things shall be performed; because thou believest not my Words, which shall be performed in their Season. Ver. 20.

3dly. and lastly, In all Exigences, and under all Difficulties, let us put our Trust and Confidence in the Lord, and he, in his own appointed Time, will deliver us out of them all. While we live in this

D

State

State of Frailty and Imperfection, the greatest Comfort that can possibly flow in upon us, arises from a firm Hope and Confidence in God Almighty, in his Providence, and sure Protection.

A CREATURE is then *most* happy, when he relies *most* upon his Creator: To trust in any other Object, is vain; nor can we in reason expect to be preserv'd by any other *Being* but *that* which created us.

God is the only proper Refuge for his Creatures to fly to, when
under

under Circumstances of Difficulty and Distress; not only because he is *Almighty*, and therefore *can* deliver them, but because he is *most merciful*, and therefore *will*.

WHEN *Jehosaphat*, warring against the King of *Syria*, was in great Danger of being slain, He cried out unto the Lord in his Trouble, and he delivered him out of his Distress, 2 Chron. xviii. 31.

WHEN *Isaiab* told *Hezekiah*, that God would deliver him out of the Hands of the *Assyrians*, the good King

King firmly relied on the Deliverance which God had promised, and accordingly he enjoyed it,
2 Kings xix. 25.

He could not indeed have any *Apprehension* of the Means by which God would perform it; but nevertheless he *believ'd* that it would be effected; and he *felt* the Benefit of that great Succour, though he *saw* not the Hand that brought it.

INTO whatever *Depths* of Calamity we are *plunged*, God's
 Arm

Arm is *strong* enough to *pluck* us out ; and therefore we ought to put our Trust in *him*, who *alone* is *able* to save us.

THUS under all the various Changes and Chances of this mortal Life, let us fix ourselves firmly upon the *Rock* of God's Providence ; so shall we be at *Rest*, amidst all *Commutations*, and stand *secure* from the *Waves* of this *troublesome World*.



Now

*Now to God the Father, God the
Son, and God the Holy Ghost,
be ascribed all Honour and
Glory, both now and for ever-
more. Amen.*



FINIS.



Now

